



USAID | UKRAINE

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

POLITICAL PROCESS DEVELOPMENT



Courtesy of Freedom House, Ukraine

Members of the CSO Znayu displaying their promotional materials.

THE CHALLENGE

The striking developments of 2004 that led to demonstrations and a re-vote of the presidential election were subsequently tempered by chaos and ineffectiveness in the government, often characterized by mismanagement and countervailing policy directions, which ultimately slowed progress on priority reforms. Democratic reforms that continue to confront the government include: sustaining an election system that will assure free and fair elections and a system to monitor them; developing a party system that is pluralistic, open and accessible; and creating an effective parliamentary system.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Elections are free, fair, and participatory;
- Political parties are managed more transparently and effectively, are more responsive to their constituencies, and better represent citizen concerns;
- NGOs are well-equipped to play an active role in the political and electoral process.

OVERVIEW

The trend of Ukraine's national and democratic development changed dramatically in 2004-05. A new reform-minded government, led by Viktor Yushchenko, was swept into office, in large part due to demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians in a peaceful civic movement against electoral fraud. The uncertainty and political turmoil that followed showed that the country needed to continue to develop its democratic institutions and processes. USAID programs promote fair and transparent elections, in a non-partisan manner. To this end, the Mission supports activities in political party development, strengthening election administration, civic monitoring, and legislative reform. As a complement to other civil society building activities, USAID assistance encourages active, informed citizen participation in the political process.

OUR PROGRAMS

Strengthening Electoral Administration in Ukraine (SEAUP)

The program promotes more open, credible and competitive elections at every level, as well as adherence to the legal framework and to international standards by improving the legal and regulatory framework. Through activities such as trainings, conferences, workshops and development of methodological and technical materials, the program helps increase the professionalism, competence and independence of legislators, election officials, non-governmental organizations, media entities, political parties, judges and lawyers.

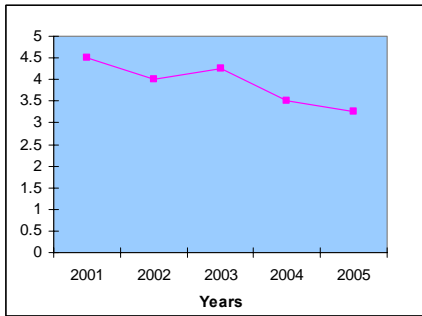
Political Parties Building and Development

Assistance is provided to political parties and civic advocacy groups to boost their organizational capacity to recruit and mobilize supporters, and to build coalitions on the national and regional level. This includes training programs for political parties, youth, women and local elected officials in Kyiv and 15 oblasts. Activities include training seminars, party development advice and consultations for party leaders. Programs train elected officials on constituent outreach; work with politically active women to strengthen advocacy skills; and train youth NGOs to promote leadership and develop campaigning skills.

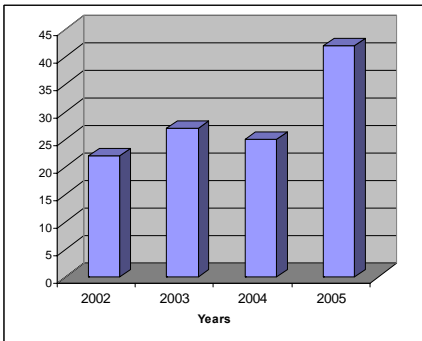
Parliamentary Development Program (PDP)

PDP works to strengthen the capacity of Ukraine's Parliament in adopting legislation and establishing processes and institutions that are benchmarks of progressive transitional parliaments. This includes improving the Parliament's legislative process; providing support for developing legislative oversight of the executive system and making the Verkhovna Rada a more effective counterweight to executive power; developing more effective and democratic internal management systems; and establishing a parliamentary internship program. The program also includes facilitating access of citizens to the legislative process and promoting their participation in parliamentary committee hearings and other parliamentary activities.

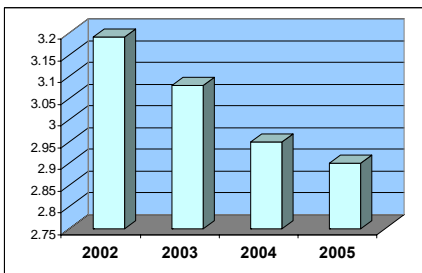
Electoral Process Factor, 7→1



Public Confidence in the Parliament, % (Source: IFES annual opinion poll)



Legislative Process Index (1=poor; 5=excellent)



Implementing Partners

Development Associates, Inc,
Freedom House, Indiana
University, Eurasia Foundation,
National Democratic Institute,
International Republican
Institute

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The International Republican Institute (IRI) conducted 15 trainings on communication strategy for 250 press service staff at local councils and administrations. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) trained 100 Verkhovna Rada faction staff on communications and press operations, and 230 individuals participated in training sessions for party poll-watchers. Combined, NDI and IRI trained 6,279 party poll-watchers to ensure transparency in the 2006 Parliamentary elections.
- In 2005, NDI's Executive Interns Program, aimed at supporting Ukraine's government in increasing its management capacity and bringing young leaders to the ranks of the Ukrainian civil service, sent 23 participants for internships in Lithuania, Latvia and Poland as well as in Ukrainian government agencies.
- USAID supported an international observation mission for the 2006 Parliamentary elections through the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), a coalition of election monitoring NGOs from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. More than 500 international observers from 15 different countries participated.
- USAID also supported a number of prominent Ukrainian civic groups carrying out non-partisan voter education and voter participation initiatives, including street events, door-to-door campaigns, concerts, contests, mock elections, and town meetings. Forty-six voter education grants were awarded to non-governmental groups, and 1.7 million printed materials were distributed. Voter education activities resulted in higher voter awareness about changes to a proportional system in the parliamentary election legislation. One public survey showed a 13.3% increase in voter awareness between December 2005 and March 2006, from 61.4% to 74.7%.
- Freedom House produced four Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on voting procedures for the March 2006 parliamentary elections, which were aired on national and regional television and radio and endorsed by the Central Election Commission (CEC).
- USAID's Strengthening Electoral Administration in Ukraine Project trained approximately 150,000 election commissioners in the new parliamentary election law, and more than 5,000 local election commissioners received training in preparation for the March 2006 local elections. SEAUP distributed more than 450,000 copies of training and instructional materials endorsed by the CEC, to over 33,000 polling stations, 225 Constituency Election Commissions and 45 party and bloc headquarters.
- USAID programs have greatly improved transparency of the Rada and have helped to disseminate important legislative information through a new Press Center and the institutionalization of biweekly press conferences. The Rada has incorporated several suggested improvements to its official website, significantly broadening the scope of information available to the public.
- For a decade, USAID has funded an annual parliamentary internship program. Over 40 percent of former interns remain in public service. Many of them hold high elected and executive posts. (Central Election Commission member, Deputy Minister on Youth Policy, Deputy Minister of Justice).

For more information, please contact USAID/Ukraine Development Outreach & Communications, tel. (380 44) 537 4600 or visit <http://ukraine.usaid.gov>